

North Carolina Department of Transportation

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

AN OVERVIEW

Who We Are

N.C. Department of Transportation
Communications Office

What We Do

The Communications Office's mission is to inform and educate the public about NCDOT programs and activities.

Major Functions

- Public Information
- Public Relations
- Public Affairs

Media Relations



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

Release: IMMEDIATE
Contact: Jessica R. Jones, (919) 733-2522
Release No.: 109

Date: February 22, 2005
Distribution: Wake

**NCDOT INSTALLS NEWLY DESIGNED
LEFT-TURN TRAFFIC SIGNAL AT WAKEMED**

RALEIGH- The N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has installed a newly-designed traffic signal display at the New Bern Avenue employee/visitor entrance to WakeMed. The installation is part of a national study and is designed to improve safety for motorists when making a left turn.

The new signal adds a flashing yellow arrow between the solid green and solid yellow arrows on the signal head. When the flashing yellow arrow is displayed left turns are permitted, meaning drivers must yield to oncoming traffic before turning.

The new
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The new
driver
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New Left-Turn Traffic Light Planned For Raleigh

POSTED: 8:02 am EST February 22, 2005

RALEIGH, N.C. -- The North Carolina DOT hopes a new type of traffic light will save lives.

The new light includes a flashing yellow arrow, never seen before in the Triangle.

Motor
Comm
g fuller
signal

The arrow would replace the solid green light at intersections where drivers turn across oncoming traffic. It would warn drivers to proceed with caution.

Engineers say too many drivers automatically think green means go, even if they don't have the right of way.

The first light will be on New Bern Avenue at the main visitor's entrance to WakeMed Hospital.

"We feel like people may use more caution and use a little more care before they proceed out into the intersection and make that left turn," said Greg Fuller, a N.C. DOT signals engineer.

The DOT hopes to save money with the new lights by eliminating "Left Turn Yield" signs.

[Return to Today's Clips](#)

MAILING ADDRESS:
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

TELEPHONE: 919-733-2522
FAX: 919-733-9980

LOCATION:
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET

Outer Banks Sentinel

<http://www.obsentinel.com>

Housing development's future may depend on DOT generosity
BY PAUL J. GORZKOWSKI | SENTINEL STAFF

A rendering of what the proposed project will look like from the road.

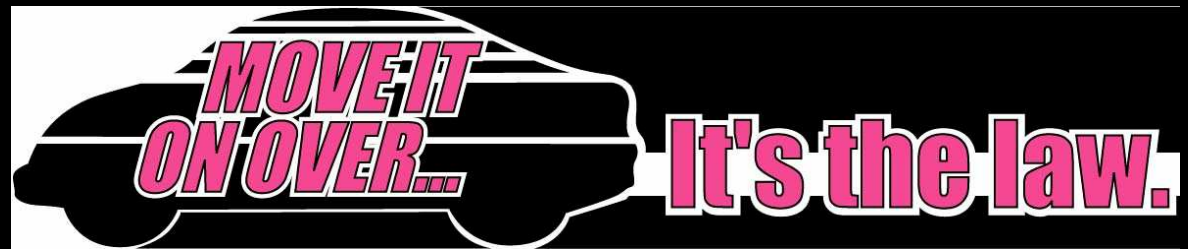
Plans for a new housing development in Manns Harbor includes moving a section of Hwy 264 near William Umstead Memorial Bridge to accommodate the placement of 26 septic tanks on the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) right-of-way.

A request from a representative of Outdoor Properties, LLC, of Greenville, which owns the property that was formerly the Manns Harbor Marina, was sent to the right-of-way Disposal Committee in Raleigh, seeking permission to move 1,000 feet of road starting near the foot of Umstead Bridge.

Bill Jones of the NCDOT Communications Office in Raleigh said the Right-of-way Disposal and Control of Access Review Committee is a technical committee that reviews requests from the division engineer concerning the disposal of the state-owned right-of-way.

"The committee must determine if the right-of-way requested will be needed for future highway purposes; if the right-of-way being retained is adequate under present day standards for the highway facility involved; if the release of the right-of-way will adversely affect the highway facility or traffic; and other technical points," said Jones.

Information Programs/Promotions



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

Release: IMMEDIATE
Contact: Nicole Burris (919) 733-2522
Release No.: 504

Date: December 29, 2003
Distribution: Statewide

**NCDOT AND CCPS JOIN FORCES TO EDUCATE MOTORISTS ON LEGISLATION
TO IMPROVE HIGHWAY SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY**
Minor, "Fender-Bender" Type Crashes are Now Required to be Moved from Travel Lanes

Raleigh ---Transportation Secretary Lyndo Tippet and Crime Control & Public Safety Secretary Bryan Beatty have joined forces to educate motorists about new legislation aimed at improving highway safety and efficiency. Under the legislation, known as the "Quick Clearance" Act, motorists involved in a minor, non-injury accident on a highway are required to move their vehicles to the shoulder of the road as soon as possible.

As part of the same legislation, law enforcement officials are now also authorized to remove without liability commercial truck cargo and other personal property interfering with traffic flow. This allows incident management personnel to more quickly clear spilled cargo from the highway and restore traffic flow. In the past, concerns about liability sometimes caused delays in removing cargo.

"Citizens depend on our highway system to travel to jobs and for the delivery of goods and services. The sooner an incident is cleared from the highway, the sooner traffic flow can resume, thereby improving efficiency of the highway and reducing the chances of a secondary crash," said Tippet. "I applaud the General Assembly for recognizing the importance of this legislation to address one of the major causes of traffic congestion and delays. The 'Quick Clearance' Act is a critical tool to help the department improve the overall safety and efficiency of North Carolina's highway system."

Studies show that for every minute a freeway lane is closed, it takes four minutes for traffic to recover. They further show that during these backups nearly 30 percent of all highway crashes occur.

The "Quick Clearance" Act is part of House Bill 1140 and became effective October 1, 2003.

To further enhance safety on the state's highways, officials remind motorists that under what is being called the "Move Over" Law, they are required to move over to the farthest lane of travel when approaching any emergency vehicle with its lights flashing

MAILING ADDRESS:
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WEBSITE: WWW.DOT.STATE.NC.US

LOCATION:
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH NC

BOOZE IT & LOSE IT.



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

Release: IMMEDIATE
Date: July 11, 2006
Contact: Beth Horner, Public Information Officer

Phone: (919) 733-3083
Cell: (919) 291-7781
bhorner@dot.state.nc.us

MORE THAN 1,700 MOTORISTS CHARGED WITH DRIVING WHILE IMPAIRED DURING "BOOZE IT & LOSE IT" CAMPAIGN

RALEIGH — Law enforcement officers cracked down on 1,742 North Carolina motorists for driving while impaired during the "Booze It & Lose It: Operation Firecracker" campaign June 29-July 9.

Checkpoints and stepped-up patrols throughout the state marked the high-visibility enforcement effort. In addition to issuing DWI violations, officers arrested 284 fugitives and recovered 94 stolen vehicles.

"Law enforcement officers were out in full force to help ensure that the citizens of North Carolina remained safe over the July 4 holiday," said Darrell Jernigan, director of the Governor's Highway Safety Program. "Their efforts to remove impaired drivers from our roads allowed more friends and families to celebrate together."

Law enforcement officers conducted more than 5,200 checkpoints and stepped-up patrols during the campaign. Counties with the highest number of DWI citations include Mecklenburg (154), Carteret (70) and Durham (69).

In addition to DWI violations, officers last week issued 6,115 safety belt and 858 child passenger safety violations. Among the 55,876 total traffic and criminal citations reported were 18,004 speeding violations and 1,110 drug charges.

	Checkpoints and Patrols	Total DWI	Total Occupant Restraint	Total Criminal Charges	Total Other Traffic Violations	Total Traffic and Criminal Violations
June 29-July 9	5,204	1,742	6,973	4,661	40,772	55,876

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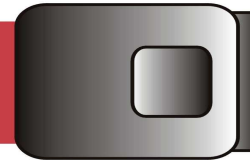
For information about "Booze It & Lose It" or for information regarding other North Carolina highway safety issues, call GHSP Public Information Officer Beth Horner at 919-733-3083 or visit their Web site at: www.ncdot.org/secretary/ghsp/.

MAILING ADDRESS:
GOVERNOR'S HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM
1008 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH, NC 27609-1508

TELEPHONE: 919-733-3083
FAX: 919-733-0604
WWW.NCDOT.ORG/SECRETARY/GHSP/

LOCATION:
215 EAST LANE STREET
RALEIGH, NC

CLICK



IT

OR TICKET.



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

Release: IMMEDIATE
Date: June 6, 2006
Contact: Beth Horner, Public Information Officer
Catherine McLaurin, Deputy Public Information Officer
Phone: (919) 733-3083 (cell: 919-291-7781)
E-mail: bhorner@dot.state.nc.us
cmclaurin@dot.state.nc.us

**'CLICK IT OR TICKET' CAMPAIGN NETS 18,384 OCCUPANT
PROTECTION CHARGES**

\$1.5 Million Seized in Vance County During Checkpoint

RALEIGH — More than 18,000 drivers and passengers were cited for safety belt and child passenger safety violations during the spring "Click It or Ticket" campaign, which began May 22 and ended June 4.

The final statewide tally for the campaign includes a total of 16,890 safety belt citations and 1,494 child passenger safety citations. State and local law enforcement officers issued the citations during nearly 7,200 checkpoints and stepped-up patrols. During a checkpoint in Vance County \$1,550,000 was seized by officers from the Henderson Police Department and the Vance County Sheriff's Office.

North Carolina's buckle-up rate for drivers and passengers is 86.7 percent. Nationally, nearly 18 percent of drivers and passengers still fail to wear their safety belt while driving or riding in a motor vehicle.

"Although North Carolina's safety belt usage rate is the highest ever, the number of violations issued during this campaign shows that there are still motorists out there not following the law," said Darrell Jernigan, director of the Governor's Highway Safety Program. "Law enforcement officers have done an outstanding job the last two weeks and we hope that their efforts will encourage more North Carolinians buckle up."

Counties with the highest occupant restraint charges include Mecklenburg (2,441), Wake (2,142), Robeson (521) and New Hanover (504).

In addition to cracking down on unrestrained drivers and passengers, officers across the state charged 2,110 motorists with driving while impaired. Wake County recorded the highest number of DWI violations, with 251 impaired driving arrests. Officers issued a total of 7,474 criminal violations, including 1,761 drug charges, 141 stolen vehicles and 699 fugitives captured.

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RALEIGH, NC 27606-1506

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FAX: 919-733-0604
WWW.DOT.STATE.NC.US/SERVICES/GHSP/

LOCATION:
215 EAST LANE STREET
RALEIGH, NC

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA



**TOLL-FREE
Travel Information Line**

Available 24/7/365

Toll-free to landline and
wireless callers

Easy to use with
voice-activated navigation

Helpful in trip and
commute planning

**Know Before
You Go!**

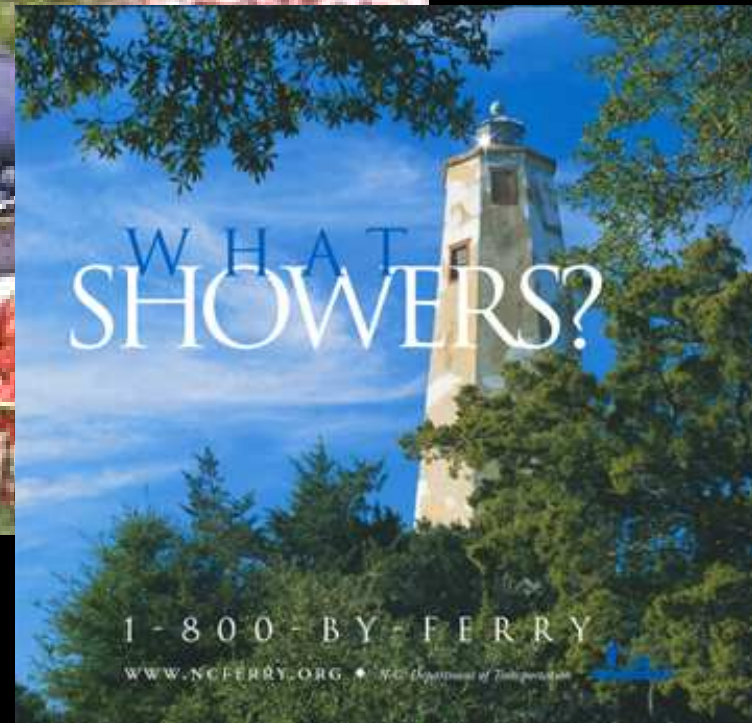
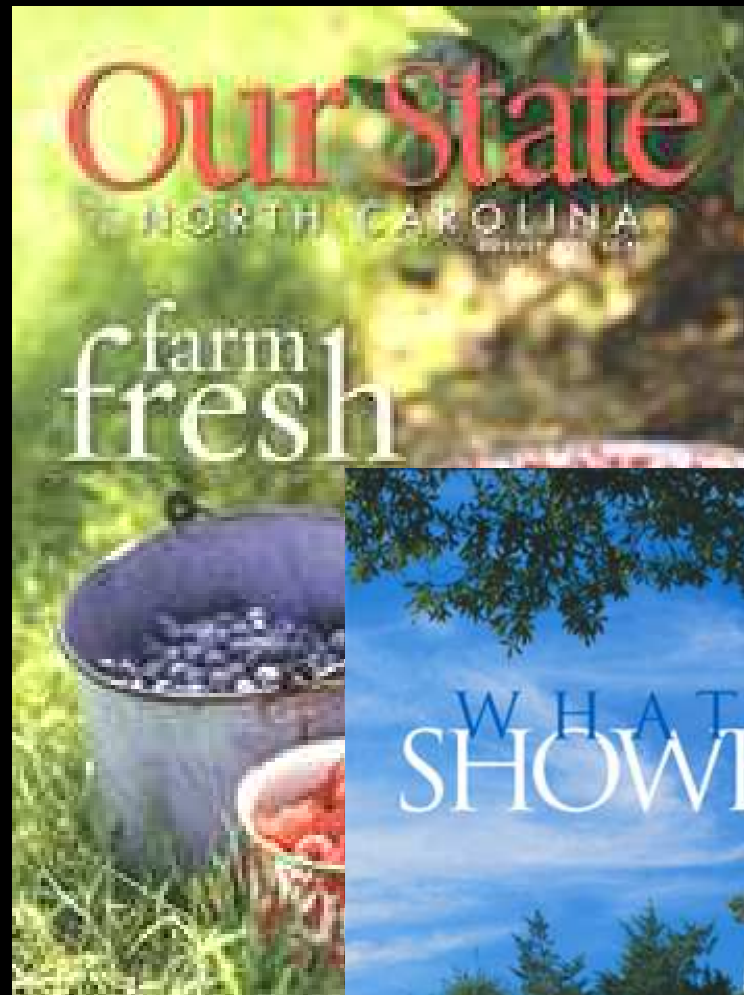
DIAL 511

Outside North Carolina, dial
1-877-511-INNC (toll-free)

Or visit our web site for more travel
information and pre-trip planning:

www.ncsmartlink.org

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA



Special Events

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	
MICHAEL F. EASLEY g200000000	LYNDD TIPPETT g200000000

Release: Immediate
 Contact: Shelley Winters, (919) 733-2522
 Release No: 193

Date: June 21, 2006
 Distribution: MC

NCDOT TO HOLD CELEBRATIONS COMMEMORATING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

RALEIGH — The N.C. Department of Transportation is hosting a series of celebrations during the week of June 26 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways and the role it has played in the state's growth and success.

"Over the last 50 years the rest of the nation has provided invaluable information to North Carolina."

Each event will be held interstate route, also in


Event dates, locations

Monday, June 26
 10:30-10:50 a.m.

Tuesday, June 27
 10-10:20 a.m.


Wednesday, June 28
 3-3:20 p.m.

REC'D: NCDOT
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 1541 1400 5000000000 C0000000000000000
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1956


In 1956, North Carolina's 714 miles of interstate highway were designated to become Interstates 95, 85, 40 and 26.



THE NORTH CAROLINA INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

North Carolina Connections

Connecting People, Places and Products



THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM Anniversary


The North Carolina Department of Transportation Cordially invites you to the

50th Anniversary Celebration of the Interstate Highway System

Wednesday, June 28, 2006
 10 a.m.

I-85 Alamance County Rest Area - Northbound

Directions
 Traveling I-85 North, rest area is at mile marker 139, three miles west of Burlington.



Today, North Carolina has more than 1,083 miles of interstate highways and seven interstate designations.

2006

The lowest elevation on North Carolina's interstate system is on I-85 at the Rutherford County/Transylvania County line, which is 15 feet above sea level.

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Judge Sam J. Ervin III Freeway

DEDICATION CEREMONY

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2006
10 A.M.

WESTERN PIEDMONT COMMUNITY COLLEGE • MORGANTON, NC

Emcee	Alan Thornburg, <i>Member N.C. Board of Transportation</i>
Presenting the Colors	Burke County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard
Pledge of Allegiance	Caroline Elisabeth Ervin, <i>Granddaughter</i>
Invocation	Reverend W.F. McIntosh <i>Greene Street Presbyterian Church</i>
Greetings and Introductions	Steve B. Settlemyer, <i>Attorney City of Morganton</i> Wayne F. Abele Sr., <i>Chairman Burke County Commissioners</i>
Master of Ceremonies	Alan Thornburg
Guests	Lyndo Tippet, <i>Secretary N.C. Department of Transportation</i> Sam J. Ervin IV, <i>Son</i> Sergeant Tippet, <i>Alan Thornburg</i>



Customer Service



If you have transportation questions,
call our Customer Service Office toll-free.

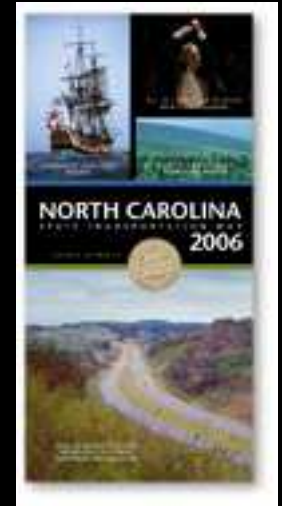
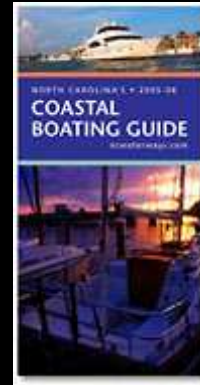
1.877.DOT.4YOU

1-877-DOT-4YOU

- Office is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–5:30 p.m., with extended hours as necessary.
- Most questions are answered immediately by Customer Service Staff or researched and then answered with a call back.
- Detailed questions are forwarded to appropriate personnel.

Publications

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA



IN THE LOOP

A Monthly NCDOT Employee Newsletter

August 2006



SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

The month of August traditionally marks the start of another school year and signals the return of school buses, carpools and student pedestrians to our highways. However, with many schools changing from traditional to year-round or modified schedules, the North Carolina Department of Transportation's commitment to protecting our children as they travel to school has become a priority throughout the year.

We see and hear school buses everyday in our neighborhoods as they transport students and watch as carpool lines form outside local school buildings. Yet, we do not see nearly as many students walking or bicycling to and from school.

About 30 years ago, nearly 90 percent of children who lived within a mile of school walked or bicycled as their primary mode of transportation. Today, fewer than 15 percent of students walk or bicycle to school, while more than 50 percent arrive in private cars. This decline in walking and bicycling has had an adverse effect on traffic congestion and air quality around schools, as well as pedestrian and bicycle safety. In addition, evidence has shown that children who lead a

sedentary lifestyle are at greater risk for health problems.

The goal of the federal Safe Routes to School Program, which is administered by state departments of transportation, is to empower communities to make walking and bicycling a routine and fun activity again.

While we have made it a priority to increase the number of students who walk and bicycle to school, it is inevitable that many will need to take the bus. It is important to remember that our state law requires motorists traveling in each direction to stop for a school bus with flashing red lights unless the bus is on a highway with four or more lanes that has either a center turn lane or median. The Department of Public Instruction estimates that 2,000 motorists illegally pass stopped school buses each day in our state. Given this, legislation has been passed this year to increase penalties for those who violate the law.

Let us work together and do our part to enhance the safety of our children as they travel to and from school each day.

Thank you for all you do to keep North Carolina's children and transportation system safe and reliable.

Lyndo Tippet



In August 2005 the federal government signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act, which created the Safe Routes to School Program.

The SRTS Program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration and administered by state transportation departments.

The program was created to encourage children in kindergarten to eighth grade, to walk and bicycle to school as a fun transportation alternative.

SRTS – continued on page 2

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Airport Economic Impact Study Management • Management Spotlight – Dan DeVane • Diversity Corner • PC Training Unit • Got Good News! NCDOT Does! • Training and Development • Interstate 50 • Human Resource Corner • Hats Off! • CPI Spotlight • Roadmap to Energy Efficient • Newsworthy Field Notes

<http://www.ncdot.org/public/newsletter/>

Crisis Management

- Hot or Sensitive Issues
- Problem Solving
- Statewide Emergencies
- Incident Management

Hurricanes



DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Winter Storms



TIMS

Travelers Information Management System

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA



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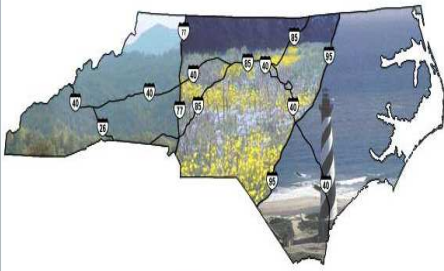
- Ferry Info
- Train Info
- Travel Info for Other States
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Traveler Information Management System

Welcome to NCDOT's Traveler Information Management System. (TIMS)

Get real time information on events that cause severe and unusual congestion on NCDOT maintained roadways in North Carolina by clicking a region on the map, by choosing a county, or by choosing a road below.

Select by Region: Route: County:



Download all Active Incidents into Excel 

RSS SOAP

The North Carolina Department of Transportation
8/4/2006 11:34:13 AM

www.apps.dot.state.nc.us/tims

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY

GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT

SECRETARY

RELEASE: Immediate

DATE: March 3, 2006

CONTACT: Lisa Crawley, (919) 733-2522

DISTRIBUTION: Special

RELEASE NO: 67

NCDOT TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE LANES ON I-40 IN DURHAM COUNTY

RALEIGH—The N.C. Department of Transportation will temporarily close lanes on I-40 in Durham between the Durham Freeway (N.C. 147) and U.S. 15/501 nightly from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m., beginning Monday, March 6, through the end of April, weather permitting.

Crews will close two of three lanes in each direction. Work will be conducted at night to minimize the inconvenience to motorists.

The closures are necessary to perform saw-cutting repairs as part of the I-40 widening project. Thru-traffic is encouraged to use the following alternate routes:

- **Motorists traveling on I-40 West should take the Durham Freeway North (N.C. 147) to I-85 South back to I-40 West.**
- **Motorists traveling on I-40 East should take I-85 North to the Durham Freeway South (N.C. 147) back to I-40 East.**

NCDOT reminds motorists to watch signs for construction information, stay alert and obey the posted speed limit. Plan ahead before driving by visiting the NCDOT Traveler Information Management Web site at www.ncsmartlink.org or call 511, the state's free travel information line for current travel conditions.

NCDOT

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CONSTRUCTION UNIT
1542 N.W. SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH, NC 27609-1542

TELEPHONE: 919-733-2218
FAX: 919-733-2441
WEBSITE: www.ncdot.state.nc.us

LOCATION
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WELINGTON STREET
RALEIGH, NC

Media Policy

- The N.C. Department of Transportation has an open and responsive relationship with the media.
- Employees should respond directly to the media when approached about routine matters.
- However, questions on policy, legislative issues or controversial matters should be referred to the Communications Office.

Key Points To Remember

- Promptly return a reporter's call and find out what they are calling about and their deadline.
- Don't feel pressured into answering a reporter's questions right away. Take time to research and prepare your response as necessary.

Key points, cont'd...

- Give facts, not opinions.
- Don't speculate.
- Don't comment about subjects outside your area of expertise.
- Explain complex programs and subjects in simple terms.

Key points cont'd

- Avoid acronyms.
- Don't say "no comment".
- Stay on the record.
- Never lie to a reporter.

Key points cont'd...

- Don't accept a reporter's definition if it's not accurate.
- Don't ask a reporter for permission to review their story.
- Any doubts about anything, consult with your public relations staff.

Preparing for an interview

- Be prepared and plan what you're going to say.
- Ask the reporter what the topic is and what questions will be asked.
- Anticipate other questions that may come up.

Preparing cont'd

- Always present a neat, professional appearance.
- Don't wear sunglasses.
- Don't chew gum.
- Bring the right attitude.

When Not to Answer

- Legal cases pending.
- Personal information that is not public record.
- Information about or for another person or agency.
- Irrelevant questions.

Communications Office

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

**NCDOT**
Communications Office

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The Communications Office is the first line of communication between the department and the public. The mission of the Communications Office is to inform and educate the public about transportation issues and activities.

The North Carolina
Department of Transportation

www.ncdot.org/public/